

***Subcommittee of the Water Resources Coordinating Council  
To Focus on Recommendations required by HF756  
(WRCC Established under Iowa Code Chapter 466B)***

**RECOMMENDATION SUMMARIES**

2009 Iowa legislation, [HF 756](#), requires the state's Water Resources Coordinating Council ([WRCC](#)) to submit policy and funding recommendations that promote "a watershed management approach to reduce the adverse impact of future flooding on this state's residents, businesses, communities, and soil and water quality." Four work groups have worked on components of the [recommendations required by HF 756](#). The work groups include:

- #1: [Flood plain management and regulation](#)
- #2: [Lowland focus](#): Wetland protection, restoration and construction; and conservation easements and other land management
- #3: [Upland Focus](#): Perennial ground cover and other agricultural conservation practices; and permanent or temporary water retention structures.
- #4: [Stormwater](#): Promulgation and implementation of statewide stormwater management standards; and pervious pavement, bioswales, and other urban conservation practices.

Draft recommendations as of 9/15/09 are as follows:

**WORK GROUP 1: FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT**

**FLOODPLAIN REGULATIONS**

- #1: The 0.2% flood should be the regulated flood plain instead of the 1% flood. This change should be phased in as the 0.2% flood plains and floodways are identified on maps approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- #2: The state should prohibit development (structures, fill and other restrictions to flood flows) in the floodway of the regulated flood plain. Reconstruction of substantially damaged structures already located in the floodway should also be prohibited.
- #3: The use of fill to elevate new or reconstructed structures (excluding levees) in the flood plain should be restricted to no more than three vertical feet. Other means of elevating structures should be allowed. Structures in the regulated flood plain but outside the floodway should be constructed in a manner that will reduce the damage caused by the 0.2% flood. These restrictions should be phased in as the 0.2% flood plains are identified on maps approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**FLOOD CONTROL STRUCTURES (LEVEES)**

- #4: Areas on the landward side of a flood control levee recognized by the Federal Emergency Management Agency as protecting against the 0.2% flood should not be considered as in the 0.2% floodplain and should not be subject to the regulations for the 0.2% flood plain.

**#5:** Flood control levees should primarily be used to protect areas with existing development if there are no practical alternatives for mitigating damage from floods.

**#6:** The governor should support and endorse Alternative H in the "Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan - Final Report June 2008 (Revised Aug 14, 2008)" prepared by the Army Corps of Engineers. This alternative would improve the existing levee system to provide protection from the 0.2% flood along the Mississippi River (not the tributaries). [Note: The Army Corps of Engineers employees participating in the work group did not endorse any alternative.]

**#7:** The state should create a grant program to help entities bear the cost of certifying existing flood control levees.

**#8:** The state should create a grant program to assist entities with improving existing levees as one way to meet the new 0.2% flood regulations.

#### PLANNING

**#9:** The state should create a grant program to support local planning entities for developing local flood plain management plans. Preference should be given to planning activities that benefit a region or watershed. The goal of these flood plain management plans should be to reduce the flood exposure to people and property and thereby reduce flood damages.

#### FLOOD RISK EDUCATION

**#10:** The legislature and the governor should support the formation of a local chapter of the Association of State Flood Plain Managers in Iowa that would provide a vehicle for local managers and planners to discuss flood plain issues and learn from each other.

**#11:** The Iowa State University Extension Service should be tasked with and appropriated funds for educating the general public about flood plains, flood risks and basic flood plain management principles. The ISU Extension Service already has a network of educators across Iowa and should develop materials and programs in consultation with flood plain experts.

#### CRITICAL FACILITIES

**#12:** New Class I Critical Facilities should be located outside the 0.2% flood plain whenever practical. New Class I Critical Facilities should also be designed and located as to maintain their function during a 0.2% flood whenever practical.

#### **OTHER OPINIONS EXPRESSED:**

*Whenever possible, the workgroup tried to reach consensus on the statements and recommendations. When consensus was reached it was rarely unanimous. Below are the viewpoints of those that did not necessarily agree with the statements and recommendations above.*

- ◆ *Government should not impose restrictions on the use of property. Many citizens that live in a flood plain are aware of and have accepted the risks and do not expect any help from the government.*
- ◆ *Flood control structures are not reliable enough to be used extensively in flood plain management. Any flood plain management strategy that uses structural flood controls in lieu of removing or flood proofing structures in the 0.2% flood plain is incomplete and will fail eventually. Structural controls do have their place—to protect existing development that cannot be mitigated in other ways. However, in many instances, structural controls are used because they are less intrusive and less costly and more effective mitigation measures.*
- ◆ *The geographic boundaries and the economic impacts of delineating the 0.2% flood plain area as the regulated flood plain are currently unknown. A mapping project has been recently initiated that will produce flood maps for the entire state but it will not be completed and approved by FEMA for another five to seven years. The delineation of the 0.2% flood plains and floodways should be completed in order to educate property owners and local communities and to make an informed policy decision. Some in the workgroup believe that the policy decision to move to a 0.2% regulated flood plain should wait until delineation of the 0.2% flood plains and floodways is completed and the impacts of this change analyzed before making a policy decision which will have an impact on the property rights of many lowans including the value of their property and risk of flood damage.*

*The workgroup realizes that the expanded or new policy recommendations made here have serious implications to the citizens of Iowa. Many residences and other buildings will have to be moved from the 0.2% flood plain after being damaged rather than being rebuilt in their current location. New development in the 0.2% flood plain, while not prohibited by these recommendations, will be more difficult and expensive than it is now. But the goal of these recommendations is to reduce the damage caused by flooding and that cannot be accomplished without changes in how we manage our flood plains.*

*Many of the workgroup members are representatives of different public interest groups. While the representatives participated with the full knowledge of the groups they represent, it should not be assumed that the groups or their representatives fully endorse the recommendations or statements made herein.*

## **WORK GROUP 2: LOWLAND FOCUS**

### **PLANNING & COORDINATION:**

**#1:** Provide funding for watershed project planning and the implementation and maintenance of high priority flood damage reduction projects.

**#2:** The WRCC should move more quickly from information sharing to actual interagency program coordination.

**#3:** Provide interagency assessment and project planning to support and inform infrastructure / easement / land purchase investment decisions in floodplain areas.

NON-STRUCTURAL:

**#4:** Reconnect streams and rivers to their flood plains and floodways. This practice involves the modifications of levees, roads, channels and diversions. The State of Iowa should consider levee district buyouts when they are needed in order to accomplish stream-floodplain reconnections.

**#5:** Drainage Water Management to allow for the seasonal retention of water in tile drained fields should be supported technically. This practice is most easily adopted in very flat landscapes.

**#6:** Provide authority for the purchase of easements in upland areas that are part of planned flood risk reduction projects. The easements would stipulate the use of water infiltration practices that are appropriate for each situation. Practices might include contour farming, strips of perennial vegetation, ponds, wetlands, no-till, and other measures.

**#7:** Provide a means of indemnification that would allow levees to be modified or removed and floodplains to be farmed with the agreement that if there is flooding the land will be used for back up and holding water.

PROJECTS:

**#8:** Integrate multi-purpose wetlands into watersheds with drainage districts or larger drainage systems. Systems would be retrofitted to enable nutrient trapping and treatment; more water infiltration and evapotranspiration; greater retention of run-off; and habitat to support biodiversity. Maintain a holistic view of watershed management and targeting funds and programs within those watersheds.

**#9:** Develop, implement, monitor and document a watershed project that has as a primary goal high infiltration of rainfall under non-saturated soil moisture conditions in both rural and urban areas.

**#10:** Conduct a cooperative pilot project for the evaluation of strategies for reducing severe scour erosion and sand deposition by floodwaters under various soils/geology conditions. Strategies would include but are not limited to levee and road modifications, reforestation and grassland seeding. This project should be part of an overall watershed plan at the HUC 8 scale or larger.

**#11:** Enhance WRT, EWP, FRPP, and CRP programs with state matching funds.

EDUCATE & INFORM:

**#12:** Include floodplain or alluvial soils information as part of the disclosure form used as part of real estate transactions.

**#13:** "I-Farm" is a farm resource management and business planning tool developed at ISU. I-Farm could help farmers plan and create infiltration systems to accommodate one inch rainfalls. I-Farm should be used by ISU Extension and other agencies to support conservation and business planning.

**WORK GROUP 3: UPLAND FOCUS**

PRIOR STUDY HAS YIELDED GOOD RECOMMENDATIONS THAT SHOULD BE RECONSIDERED

**#1:** Highlights from prior flood plain-related recommendations brought forward by water resources task forces in 2001, 2003 and 2007 should be reconsidered (See EXHIBIT 1)

#### PILOT/DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

**#2:** Fund a pilot/demonstration project involving a “hybrid” of both implementation and research, implementing best practices as well as hydrologic studies at the Iowa Flood Center (U of I) and management for flood reduction

- Based on criteria including isolated community (at top of watershed) impacted in 2008, impaired waters (for funding), willingness of watershed stakeholders, geographic MLRA, flexibility to expand to larger scale, visible and quantifiable results, take advantage of other ongoing research (e.g. Iowa/Cedar Basin), input from stakeholder groups including agriculture community, livestock groups, cities, state agencies, universities, water interests (water, waste water and rural water), ability to collect soil moisture data, an area with a gaging station or recommend installation of a gage in the area
- Multi-jurisdictional effort and funding, leverage one program with another (multi-programmatic)
- Funding sources ranging from individual to all levels of government, private sector including commodity groups

**#3:** Manage existing water resources programs to address flood risk management

#### EDUCATION

**#4:** The Iowa State University Extension Service should be tasked with and appropriated funds for educating the general public about flood plains, flood risks and basic flood plain management principles. The ISU Extension Service already has a network of educators across Iowa and should develop materials and programs in consultation with flood plain experts. (Same as Work Group #1, recommendation #11)

**#5:** Conduct a hydrological tiling study to determine the impact tile drainage has on infiltration, surface runoff, and flooding. (Same as Work Group #4, recommendation #3) Consider impacts of potholes, wetlands and water retention structures.

**#6:** Develop a soil moisture monitoring network through the Iowa Water Center and Leopold Center, both at ISU

**#7: Make** extensive use of the NRCS Soil Conditioning Index tool. Conservation and agronomic practices that are matched to the need of the land and objective of the landowner will improve sustainability over the long term, potentially increasing profitability, reducing impacts of flooding, and improving water quality. One example of a best practice is use of perennial ground covers. An improved Soil Conditioning Index score is an indication of good agronomic and conservation practices.

**#8:** A media campaign is needed to let Iowans know we are all affected by, and have an impact on, watershed issues. Landowner/tenant issues should be considered as part of this campaign.

**#9:** Storm frequency needs to be analyzed for accuracy of predictions (i.e. basis for a “ten-year storm”)

**#10:** Reassess criteria for conservation practices because of changing climate.

- NRCS Field Office Technical Guide (conservation criteria)
- NRCS Engineering Field Manual (design criteria)

## RESOURCES

**#11:** Recommend increased funding for staff at research and field levels. Watershed level planning requires effort at the research level to actual watershed level down to the field level working with individual farmers. Current staffing levels among state and federal resources agencies are not sufficient to provide the level of technical expertise that would be required. Private consultants (engineering firms, etc.) would not be sufficient to fill the gap.

**#12:** Recommend multi-year state funding for the Iowa Flood Center

**#13:** Recognize that voters may approve a 2010 referendum question amending Iowa’s Constitution to provide that if the state raises the sales tax in the future, 3/8ths of the increase will go to a new protected account for natural resources projects, including soil and water conservation; a one-penny increase would generate about \$150 million annually which could serve as a funding source.

**#14:** A tax on municipal water, sales tax on bottled water, and/or collecting a fee on bottled water similar to pop bottles, could serve as additional funding sources

## **WORK GROUP 4: STORMWATER**

### STORMWATER EDUCATION

**#1:** Promote utilization of the Iowa Stormwater Management Manual as a guide for stormwater management.

**#2:** Enhance existing educational efforts on stormwater management. Existing programs are offered through: Iowa Stormwater Partnership, Iowa Stormwater Education Program, Urban Conservationists, Rainscaping Iowa Initiative, and Councils of Government. Stormwater management education should include engineers; state, county, and city officials; planners, realtors, citizens, commercial and residential businesses and focus on water quantity and quality and environmental impacts.

**#3:** Conduct a hydrological tiling study to determine the impact tile drainage has on infiltration, surface runoff, and flooding.

**#4:** Use stormwater best practices in all state-funded projects. The State should demonstrate its commitment to water quality and quantity issues by requiring construction on State properties and any project utilizing State funds to use best practices to retain at least the first inch of rain that falls on the property.

## PLANNING

**#5:** Expand the authority of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts by allowing them to create Watershed Districts. The Watershed Districts would create comprehensive plans with integrated water management concepts. Such districts should be given authority to tax and leverage taxes to create a sustainable funding source.

## STORMWATER REGULATION and FINANCING

**#6:** Incorporate a phase-in approach for stormwater management requirements. Phase-in approaches could be based on specific years, population thresholds, and/or growth rates. Another option could begin with flooded areas first, then municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), then mid-size cities, then small communities.

**#7:** Amend current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Program (NPDES) regulations, including Phase I and II, to incorporate low impact development concepts and stronger compliance monitoring and tracking.

**#8:** Support Senate File 458, which authorizes cities to establish stormwater drainage system utility districts for purposes of special assessments. The legislation could be strengthened by addressing runoff from agricultural areas and unincorporated communities. Other options include creating a credit system, creating a buffer zone of a set number of miles outside of cities' boundaries for regulation authority.

**#9:** Support Senate File 367, which requires cities and counties to adopt development standards to address water quantity-quality. Adopting development standards provides a consistent approach to stormwater management for communities, including uniformity with practices implemented. May consider incentives rather than regulation for implementation.

**#10:** Support existing funds for stormwater management, including the State Revolving Loan Fund and Watershed Improvement Fund. Administered by the Iowa Department of Agricultural and Land Stewardship (IDALS), the State Revolving Loan Fund can provide dollars for stormwater quality projects through low-interest loans. Also administered by IDALS, the Watershed Improvement Review Board may award competitive grants from the Watershed Improvement Fund to local watershed improvement committees, soil and water conservation districts, public water supply utilities, cities and county conservation boards. Greater funding is necessary, as is the need to target funds to high-growth counties.

**#11:** Generate funds for stormwater projects based on impervious pavement installed in both developed and new growth areas. Runoff from impervious areas is the primary contributor to the storm sewer system, thus basing a fee system on imperviousness is equitable. Stormwater fees would then also reach non-metered customers, such as rail lines, parking lots, and utility rights-of-way, which account for significant portions of impervious space in communities.

**#12:** Create a Community Stormwater Utility Fee Program to target retrofitting existing developments or to regulate or incentivize new development to incorporate stormwater management best practices, including low impact development. User fees could be based on impervious surfaces.

**#13:** Create Stormwater Credit Program to incentivize reducing imperviousness, incorporating on-site stormwater management, volume reduction, and use of specific practices. Mechanisms for fee reduction could include a percent fee reduction and quantity/quality credits. The process for implementation could include a percent reduction in imperviousness and a list of practices with various credits.

**#14:** Mimic the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program for stormwater initiatives. The PACE program uses bonds that are lent to commercial and residential property owners to finance energy retrofits and who then repay their loans over 20 years via an annual assessment on their property tax bill. PACE bonds can be issued by municipal financing districts or finance companies.

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## **EXHIBIT 1**

**This document is a compilation of the recommendations made by the Iowa Watershed Task Force in 2001, the Iowa Water Summit in 2003 and the Iowa Watershed Quality Planning Task force in 2007.**

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### **IOWA WATERSHED TASKFORCE, 2001**

#### **Goal: Develop a Framework for Enhanced Cooperation and Coordination**

##### *Recommendations*

1. Establish an on-going coordinating body to continue to address the watershed issues identified by this task force. Include similar representation from state, federal, and local agencies, nonprofits and commercial interests, as on the Watershed Task Force.

Create a “home” for coordinating entity within the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Division of Soil Conservation.

Specific services and/or functions provided by the water resources coordination body will include:

- serving as a liaison and point of contact on watershed issues with key resource and service providers linking state and federal agencies with local watershed interests;
- facilitating the connection and integration of programs/strategies currently done independently (example: wellhead protection and hazard mitigation);
- collaborating on opportunities for watershed-related training, development of a watershed clearinghouse of information and resources and development of Geographic Information System resources;
- building consensus on watershed issues among state, federal and local authorities; and
- developing an annual update on watershed programs, reporting on the progress to address the recommendations in this Watershed Task Force and other priorities established by the coordinating body.

2. Conduct a statewide needs assessment, in cooperation with appropriate local and federal entities, to identify and quantify water resource problems and funding needs. Base on each 11-digit HUC watershed in the state. Parameters for the inventory will include: land use, water uses, population, major point [43](#) and non-point sources of pollutants, floodplain management issues, identification of drinking water sources, existing water resource management practices and costs of estimated remediation practices.

#### **Goal: Increase State Support for Watershed Protection**

##### *Recommendations*

1. Establish a legislative study committee to explore in more detail the specific needs for financial support for watershed-related programs and sources of funding that could be utilized beyond the state’s General Fund. Higher levels of funding for water-related programs are critical to achieve the basic goals identified in this Task Force report, and to take better advantage of opportunities to leverage funds available from federal and other sources. Creative options that should be considered include additional mechanisms to charge fees based on polluting products or activities, credit trading, a usage-based tax added to water and sewer bills, a fraction of a percentage sales tax such as in Missouri, or a low-interest revolving loan fund similar to the Clean Water Act State Revolving Fund that is now used for sewer infrastructure projects.

2. Encourage state agencies with responsibilities for programs that impact the landscape, including the departments of transportation and economic development, to provide more active leadership and accountability in conducting programs consistent with principles of sound watershed and floodplain management. Positive examples at the state level will set the stage for positive actions by local governments and individuals. First steps should be to assist staff with additional training and to review laws and authorities that relate to watershed and floodplain management activities, identifying needed readjustments or changes so that watersheds become a primary organizational focus for doing business rather than an add-on issue.

3. Establish an ongoing, staffed watershed clearinghouse for data and grant information. All government programs that fall under the umbrella of watershed management would provide detailed project information to the clearinghouse, based on an established, consistent format (see Appendix 4: Program Description Template for a Watershed Clearinghouse). The recommended location for the clearinghouse would be Iowa State University Extension, based on the model of the Missouri Watershed Information Network.

***Practical tools for regional and local contacts and groups could include information such as:***

- GIS maps of watershed units at different hydrologic scales
- Model of assessment, planning and evaluation worksheets
- Examples of watershed action plans from Iowa or the region
- Models for convening a group of representative stakeholders, with examples of different types of facilitation and surveys for landowner and residents
- Template news releases for publicity
- Data on water quality and quantity, and other issues identified by state coordination group
- Lists of technical and financial assistance for watershed efforts

4. Support the statewide water quality monitoring plan, developed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), with additional resources to move forward to finalize the plan and achieve priority goals, including meeting legislative requirements to provide credible data (see discussion in Section IV: Essential Tools for Watersheds).

5. Continue funding for GIS programs, as described by the Iowa Water Quality Initiative, and insure that local watershed organizations have free access and training to use computerized landscape information managed by the IDNR, the Iowa Geographic Information Council and other entities. Adequate staffing is critical to help people who do not have GIS technical resources or staff capacity. Establish a repository for GIS data produced for completed and on-going watershed projects, and link to the watershed clearinghouse.

6. Develop a sustainable, smart growth development initiative to address watershed goals, or consider expanding existing efforts like IDNR's "Rebuild Iowa" program that currently works with local communities primarily to address energy efficiency issues.

**Goal: Build Local Capacity for Watershed Initiatives**

***Recommendations***

1. Encourage and assist development of local watershed councils by providing state support and technical assistance. Local soil and water conservation districts will be the focal point for assistance, providing leadership and a point of contact for local watershed initiatives.

2. Revise current state watershed grant program guidelines to better support local watershed-oriented planning and implementation initiatives. Provide structure while allowing flexibility. Establish an ad-hoc committee that includes local watershed project coordinators to review procedures and consider items

such as development of standard evaluation format and/or procedures that will provide a “base” set of reporting requirements to reduce paperwork, improve consistency and allow more effective quantification of results and comparisons between projects.

3. Increase the emphasis on watershed planning in grant programs. Make resources available to build local capacity in communities or regions for planning-related activities, such as problem assessment, outreach and group facilitation. Groups may also benefit from legal assistance to utilize opportunities for organizing under existing “subdistrict” legislation that applies to lake and water districts, sanitary districts or soil and water conservation districts.

**Goal: Emphasize the Role of Watershed Efforts in Flood Hazard Mitigation**

*Recommendations*

1. Work cooperatively with all levels of government to fund development and periodic updating of a system of floodplain mapping that is standardized and available on geographic information systems so that information on flood hazards is available in every community.
2. Fund increased floodplain education for local governments. Provide incentives for county government to better enforce existing floodplain laws and to develop tighter restrictions on new development in floodplain areas that are particularly hazard-prone.
3. Strengthen procedures for conducting environmental review of economic development funding when projects are proposed in flood-prone areas. Appropriate, low-impact development should be encouraged, and commercial and/or residential development discouraged in those areas. Guidelines should be established by the statewide coordination body that include a reporting procedure to document review process and resulting decisions.
4. Continue working to strengthen coordination between planning efforts in the areas of hazard mitigation, economic development and watershed protection.

**Goal: Encourage Citizen Involvement**

*Recommendations*

1. Initiate a public outreach and marketing campaign to build on existing and past efforts to increase awareness and appreciation of watershed issues. Work closely with local and regional watershed leaders to develop.
2. Continue to encourage involvement by diverse stakeholders in developing and leading watershed projects. Include nonprofit organizations, commercial interests and interested individuals, along with representatives of state, local and/or federal agencies. Where appropriate, provide financial assistance to bring in neutral facilitators skilled in community development to help build capacity for citizen leadership and decision-making. Also, provide additional training for state and local agency staff in working effectively with the public and encouraging citizen participation.
3. Support education efforts with youth and adults that heighten awareness, develop understanding and support local engagement on watershed issues. Effective programs to support include the Iowa Envirothon and aquatic education programs for youth, and the IOWATER citizen water quality monitoring and Adopt-a-Stream programs that primarily involve adults.
4. Increase the emphasis on addressing local social and economic issues in watershed programs.

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## **IOWA WATER SUMMIT, 2003**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- Develop a plan for building local capacity for watershed councils using principles set forward in the Watershed Task Force Report
- Utilize existing authority under Iowa Code for watershed improvement. Optimize the ability to leverage additional resources at the local level. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Soil Conservation Districts should provide the leadership to develop a funding coordination plan. (Drainage districts, watershed sub-districts, storm water utilities, 28E agreements, etc.)

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Dedicated and sustainable state funding to protect water quality in Iowa by:

- Increased priority ranking of Environment First Fund,
- Re-direct sales tax collected on drinking and bottled water,
- Utilize revenues from the lottery and develop an unending dedicated game focusing on Iowa's natural resources,
- All fees and fines used to re-capture costs and reinvest in water quality in the affected area, and,
- Expand remediation role of the Iowa Underground Storage Tank Fund to better protect groundwater and surface water.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

- To receive Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or economic development grants the applicant must assure water quality protection and improvement where possible.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- Municipal wastewater permit fees should at least cover the cost of program administration.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- Accelerate research and demonstration projects for alternative methods of management and improvement of aging drainage infrastructure systems emphasizing agronomic, economic and water quality issues. Recommend the Governor appoint a state university to lead this effort and appoint an advisory board of stakeholders to develop a plan identifying work elements, time frames and costs.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- Streamline the SRF loan process and implement a continuous loan process for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) by putting an experienced lending entity in charge of loans.
- Appoint a permanent SRF advisory committee of stakeholders to assess the efficiencies and effectiveness of the program and make recommendations for processing reform and financing terms.
- Maximize the leverage of EPA's capitalization grants. Loan programs should generate sufficient income to fund administration of the loan program and contribute to clean water programs.
- Increase use of Clean Water SRF for non-point source programs
- Increase use of Drinking Water SRF set-aside for source water protection
- Assist *Sponsored Projects (1)* for watershed improvement under the Clean and Drinking Water SRF.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

- The Governor has the leadership responsibility to coordinate funding, staff and programs to improve the effectiveness of all state programs with water resource related responsibilities. Therefore, the

Governor through Executive Order should insist on cooperation and coordination between all state agencies. The Governor should issue invitations to local, federal and public agencies, non-profit organizations and businesses to participate in addressing any resource impacting water quality and watershed management.

-Once ordered the Governor with input from a stakeholder group will initiate, oversee, and implement a needs assessment and a clean water action plan.

-Improve results based targeting of state resources for water quality. (The best outcome for the dollars invested.)

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

-The Governor, legislature and Iowa's Congressional Delegates have a responsibility to work for changes in federal funding and policy issues to better target Midwestern states water quality issues.

-Develop a multi state coalition to lobby for changes in current and future federal water quality funding and policies

-Work with appropriate federal agencies to accelerate technical and financial assistance for water quality issues in the Midwest.

-Seek a special designation from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to act as a pilot project for water quality enhancement and improvement programs. The pilot project would include access to federal funds to target measurable, results-based watershed projects to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus in Iowa.

-Within the Conservation Title of the current Farm Bill use all appropriate funding tools such as the Conservation Security Program to improve water quality.

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## **WATERSHED QUALITY PLANNING TASK FORCE, 2007**

1. **Creation of a Water Resource Coordinating Council.** The WRCC under the direction of the Governor is recommended with a common goal to develop an integrated approach to water resource management, and which recognizes the insufficiency of current approaches, programs, practices, funding and utilization of current funding programs. This approach seeks to overcome old polarities such as quantity versus quality, land versus water, the chemical versus the physical and biological, supply versus demand, political boundaries versus hydrologic boundaries and point versus non-point. This approach seeks to manage water comprehensively rather than compartmentally. The purpose of this recommendation is to coordinate programs, not to duplicate or supersede agency authorities and responsibilities. **Funding Recommendation: None**
2. **Develop a Water Quality Research and Marketing Campaign.** The task force recommends a marketing campaign be undertaken by public agencies and other organizations to rekindle the conservation ethic in all Iowans. Surveys indicate citizen's desire for improvement in water quality. Other surveys show that citizens don't understand the problems with local water quality. **Funding Recommendation: \$1 million for year one development**
3. **Larger (Regional) Watershed Assessment, Planning and Prioritization.** The state should support creating, publishing and updating periodically a Regional Watershed Assessment (RWA) program at a larger watershed scale, such as the Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC – a federal term that delineates watersheds) 8 scale. There are approximately 56 HUC 8 size watershed units delineated in Iowa. A goal is to assess 11 HUC 8 size watersheds per year for 5 years to eventually cover the entire state. The Rapid Watershed Assessment tool used by Iowa NRCS, for example, is one assessment process that may be used. A regular review and update of these assessments should also be planned. **Funding recommendation: \$5 million annually**
4. **Smaller (Community-Based) Watershed Assessment, Planning, Prioritization and Implementation.** Once a regional watershed assessment is completed at the HUC 8 scale, planned projects of a manageable scope can be implemented. Priority sub-watersheds at a HUC 12 or smaller scale can reasonably be recruited and provided more resources for planning. A sub-watershed plan should include objectives, a thorough local assessment of the physical, social, and financial resources of the watershed, an analysis of the alternatives, and an implementation plan that includes an evaluation process to measure results. **Funding Recommendation: \$5 million annually.**
5. **Support for Smaller (Community-Based) Watershed Monitoring and Measurement.** In addition to current support for water monitoring, the state should provide technical and financial support for locally-based watershed monitoring and measurement. This monitoring would be custom designed to provide information on

essential water resource questions facing the community. Local communities would first be able to use this information to support enhanced planning, local data collection, and thus helping them identify priority areas to target limited resources. **Funding**

**Recommendations: \$2.5 million annually.**

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6. **Wastewater and Stormwater Treatment Infrastructure.** We all live in a watershed. Impacts to water quality come from a variety of sources, including both rural and urban, nonpoint and point sources. Challenges for point sources and communities can have a significant impact on watershed conditions from storm water and wastewater. Aging wastewater and combined sewer/storm water infrastructure issues are having negative impacts on water quality. Also, compliance with current and future water quality standards may be cost-prohibitive for many communities. **Funding Recommendation: None.**



## EXHIBIT 2

### PRELIMINARY LIST: STATUS OF PRIOR FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT-RELATED LEGISLATION

Compiled by Legislative Services Agency:

#### 2002

SF 2145/hf2469 Water Quality Improvements -- passed but not floodplain

HCR 106 Water Quality Interim Study Resolution --water quality interim committee resolution but didn't pass

SF 2213 Clean Water Revolving Loan --not floodplain and did not pass

#### 2003

HF 525 Environmental Oversight Council -- passed house not senate and created a new Committee

HF 495 Flooding Prevention Act --introduced in Local Government Committee but never passed

#### 2004

HF 2120 Water Quality Interim Study -- Did not pass

HF 2104 Watershed Districts --Created a watershed task force. Did not pass

#### 2005

HF 200 Clean Water Standards--WIRB was established and projects can included in floodplain

SF 329 Water Quality Program -- didn't pass

HF 291 Water Quality Protection Fund -- didn't pass

#### 2006

SF 2363 Water Quality Standards -- passed

#### 2007

SF 495 Water Quality Initiative --didn't pass

SF 600 Water Quality Program --didn't pass

HF 626 Water Quality annual assessment -didn't pass

#### 2008

HF 2672 Water Resource Management Appropriations Bill -- didn't pass

2009

SF 367 -- Floodplain Urban Standards -- didn't pass

HF 742 Flood Recovery Bill -- didn't pass

HF 268 Floodplain Map Plan --- didn't pass

HF 759-- Flood Insurance for Cities & Counties -- passed

SSB 1069 -- Flood Impact Prevention -- didn't pass

SF 370 -- Flood Center Basin Study -- didn't pass

SF 458 – Storm Water Fees – didn't pass

HF 756 – Floodplain Management Recommendations – passed